

final report

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Goat seedstock industry stocktake

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Introduction

In 2011 Meat & Livestock Australia Limited (MLA) commissioned the report "Australian Goatmeat Supply Profile" to better understand the supply capabilities of the goatmeat industry in Australia.

This report estimated that the goatmeat export market required a rangeland population of 3 million goats to satisfy the 2011 level of demand, whilst favourable environmental conditions existed.

This required level of population was found to be within the estimated range of rangeland goats, reported as between 2.6 and 4 million.

However, the report warned that when favourable environmental conditions, that were evident at time of writing, did not prevail and a return to average or below average seasons occurred, a significantly higher population of rangeland goats would be required to meet the same level of demand. If this core population does not exist, the report concluded that a rapid decline in the goat numbers would occur that could see the populations drop below sustainable levels.

The report highlighted several tools that the industry had at its disposal to assist in minimising this risk of supply reducing below sustainable levels. These include the use of genetics to select for more productive animals, to increase farm production through the encouragement of new entrants into the industry and to implement extension and supply chain development initiatives to bolster the supply of goats derived from the rangeland or pastoral environment.

Little is known of the goat industry's current genetic capacity to deliver the gains that would be required to at least partly ensure supply sustainability. To improve understanding in this area MLA commissioned BCS Agribusiness to conduct a stocktake of the Australian goat seedstock industry and report on the following:

- 1. Who are the major breeder groups and individual breeders active in the seedstock industry.
- 2. What data is currently being collected by breeders in respect to pedigree and measurements. Are breeders interested in collecting further performance data. What additional data could breeders be collecting.
- 3. What are the barriers to breeders entering KIDPLAN.
- 4. Who are the key industry participants for MLA / Sheep Genetics to target to be involved in KIDPLAN and potential Producer Demonstration Sites.
- 5. The capacity of the industry to deliver genetic improvement programs.

It is clear from experiences in the lamb, wool and beef industries that genetic improvement has a role in ensuring long term sustainable and profitable production. As one of the only management practices that has a permanent and cumulative outcome, genetics is a fundamental building block in the success of any livestock industry.

Overview

Goats first arrived in Australia from England on the First Fleet as a source of meat, milk and fibre. Cashmere and Angora goats followed in the 1800's and were farmed for fibre production, along with the more recent inclusion of the South African Boer goat used extensively as a specialist meat breed to improve the productivity of existing herds.

Feral populations soon became established after the deliberate release or escape of domestic stock, and today the rangeland goat population represents the mixed genetics of the fibre, meat and milk goat breeds that have been imported into Australia over the last 230 years.

Experiences from other intensive and broadacre livestock industries have demonstrated the important role that genetics can play in the profitability of producers. Delivering both permanent and cumulative outcomes, genetic improvement will be a key component in ensuring a profitable and sustainable Australian goat industry.

Currently there is limited use of intensive selection and breeding programs within the goat industry.

Whilst the Boer seedstock industry has a successful history of breeding animals in Australia and pedigrees and well known and readily available, there is very little performance data being collected by breeders and even less being used by commercial producers utilising these genetics.

In the rangeland environment there is almost no pedigree or performance data being collected and very little selection pressure being placed on herds.

In both production systems, there is currently only a limited demand to increase the level of data being collected. Primarily this relates to an unwillingness to invest in the industry by way of capital acquisition and labour, or the belief that the current data being collected is enough to address the key industry profit driver of growth.

It is believed that this limited demand stems mainly from an overall lack of knowledge the goat industry has for the benefits that genetics can offer it.

However, there are individual breeders and producers, some of which have formed informal group arrangements that have at the very least a basic understanding of the benefits that can be obtained through a more performance approach to breeding. These are the individuals and groups that MLA needs to focus on and work with as they will provide the catalyst for a change across the industry.

Several existing and successful tools are available for MLA to work with these breeders and producers.

KIDPLAN should be the cornerstone of any program directed at improving goat genetics and all components of the program should be designed to strengthen the position of KIDPLAN in the industry.

To achieve this, KIDPLAN requires an increase in resources in excess of those that are currently available to it. This will allow goat breeders to be better serviced and the services that KIDPLAN offers to be bought up to the same level as that of LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT.

To support KIDPLAN, at least one Producer Demonstration Site, focused on evaluating a range of goat genetics currently available will be required to be established. Other benefits will also flow from such demonstration sites.

Finally, both seedstock breeders and commercial producers need to be made aware of the benefits genetics can offer their business. MLA already has the extension vehicles available to it to carry out this role, however it will need to establish a suite of targeted and comprehensive material to support this program.

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1. Methodology

In order to gain an understanding of the current capacity and potential of genetics within the Australian goat industry, meetings and discussions were held with key industry participants including seedstock breeders and commercial producers, Sheep Genetics staff as well as goat specialists in state departments of agriculture.

These discussions were interpreted and summarised in order to provide a stocktake of the Australian goat industry.

Finally, a way forward was detailed, including several recommendations that have been made for the consideration of MLA which are aimed at increasing the genetic potential of the Australian goat industry.

2. Major breeder groups and individual breeders

The Boer Goat Breeders Association of Australia (BGBAA) is the body that governs the development of the Boer breed in Australia. According to the BGBAA website there are currently 327 members of the association (www.australianboergoat.com.au).

BGBAA maintains the major herd register that is currently in use by the breed. The register is administered by Agricultural Business Research Institute (ABRI).

It is a requirement that all animals included in the register have full pedigrees recorded. Therefore, detailed pedigree information is readily available on the Boer breed.

Figure 1: Boer Goat Breeders Association Logo



BGBAA has an undeniable focus on show ring performance and as an association seems less concerned with production genetics. There are certainly members of BGBAA that are committed to a more quantitative genetic based approach, however they are in the minority.

It is currently difficult to obtain information on herd size of BGBAA members. This is due to the fact that large numbers of animals exist in the register with an active status that are dead or have been exported overseas. This is a result of members having not in the past being required to advise the register of such events or notify changes to animals status.

However, BGBAA is currently undertaking a process of auditing the herd register and members are being asked to update the status of all their animals. BGBAA expects that this process will be completed by October 2012. At that stage, it is hoped that better industry statistics will be available on Boer seedstock breeders.

Regardless, it seems likely from discussions had, that large herds (over 100 does) are in the minority with most members running a handful of animals in a 'hobby farmer' type enterprise.

Several of the larger, more commercially focused members of BGBAA, expressed concern with the current focus of BGBAA and would like to see a more commercial approach to operating the association and the breed in general. Some of these breeders have resigned from membership of BGBAA as a result.

This may have in part lead to the establishment of a second Boer goat register. Operated under the name Boer Goat Australia, this associations markets itself as the long awaited alternative choice of Boer Goat Associations

Figure 2: Boer Goat Australia Logo



Boer Goat Australia operates a national register and currently has 17 members according to its website (www.boergoataus.com.au).

Whilst BGBAA does not have a core focus of encouraging selection and breeding through the use of programs such as KIDPLAN, there are members of the association that are interested in the concept. Members such as Graham Reimers, Maryvale QLD, Michael Rayner, St George QLD and Phillip Adams, Forbes NSW demonstrate a keen interest in the area and a commitment to encouraging other members to also become involved.

Other state and regional based Boer breeder associations also exist. These include state branches of BGBAA as well as informal groups of breeders. Very few, if any, of these have breeding and selection as the major driver for their formation and are generally marketing groups put together in an attempt to generate volume of animals to increase sales opportunities. This again is a function of the small herd size of many breeders.

One group that is more focused on selection and breeding is the Boer Select group. An informal group of Boer breeders established by Colin Ramsay from Cootamundra, NSW, the group involves 10 seedstock breeders that seem to be less interested in the show ring and more on performance data. Several of these individuals are either current members of KIDPLAN or interested in becoming KIDPLAN members. It is understood that the members of this group include:

Table 1: Boer Select members

Colin & Rob Ramsay Cootamundra, NSW Karen Hoskin & John Randell Currawarna, NSW Carole Axton Stratford, VIC Justin Gilbert Dorrigo, NSW Isobel Palmer Mamballup, WA Ben Stanford Wellington, NSW Celia Burnett-Smith Toowoomba, QLD Fleur Tarlinton & Emma Cabot Ryeford, QLD Heather Osborne Sale, VIC Judith D'Aloisio & Chris Lawrance Yea, VIC

This group, under the leadership of Colin Ramsay, is well worth MLA investing time with. The members have a good basic understanding of animal genetics and are committed to improving the productivity of the breed.

Within the rangeland goat industry there are limited numbers of producers that have a focus on breeding and selecting, with most being opportunistic harvesters. Whilst many producers now are managing rangeland goats under a more agricultural type model, many of those are not placing any emphasis on selection and simply managing those animals that are bred by chance.

There is a group of rangeland producers in Western NSW that are connected in an informal way through NSW DPI. Trudie Atkinson, NSW DPI Sheep and Wool Officer located at Trangie has instigated this group and delivers extension material to them. Whilst this group is more interested in marketing and increasing returns on goats at the farm gate, there is a genuine interest in breeding and selecting.

Table 2: Western NSW rangeland producer group

Keith Franciso
Tara and Sam Hompreys
John Vagg
Tony McGinty
Randy Graham
Greg Church
Rick and Jo Gates

In addition, members of this group would be ideal to target MLA extension material towards and with the assistance of NSW DPI could be basis of extension workshops and demonstration sites.

Outside of this group in Western NSW, Ian Firth located at Dirranbandi, QLD is an astute seedstock operator that is involved in both Boer and rangeland genetics and would be equally suited to involvement in future MLA programs.

3. Goat industry data collection

All registered Boer animals have full pedigrees as a requirement of registration. Therefore pedigree data in the Boer industry is readily available. Beyond registered animals, pedigrees

are still widely collected in Boer goats but seldom, if ever, collected in rangeland or crossbred goats.

Performance data in general is collected on a limited scale. The leading performance data collectors currently in the industry are those members of the Boer Select group, in particularly those submitting data to KIDPLAN.

In 2010/2011 seven individual seedstock breeders submitted data to KIDPLAN. A summary of the pedigree and performance data submitted is included below.

Table 3: Pedigree and performance data submitted to KIDPLAN 2010/2011

	Pedigree	Birth / Rear Type	Weights	Carcase
Producer 1	✓	✓	✓	
Producer 2	✓	✓	✓	
Producer 3	✓	✓	✓	
Producer 4	✓	✓	✓	✓
Producer 5	✓	✓	✓	
Producer 6	✓	✓	✓	
Producer 7	✓	✓	✓	

Outside of pedigree, birth type and rear type, weight is the only trait that is being submitted to Sheep Genetics in any volume.

Stage at which weight is being submitted is detailed below:

Table 4: Stage of weight data submitted to KIDPLAN 2010/2011

	Birth	Weaning	Post Weaning	Yearling	Hogget	Adult
Producer 1	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Producer 2		✓	✓	✓		
Producer 3	✓	✓				
Producer 4	√	✓	✓			
Producer 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Producer 6		✓				
Producer 7		✓				

Whilst breeders submitting data to KIDPLAN are only a small subset of seedstock breeders, their focus on pedigree, birth and rear type and early stage weights are reflective of the wider Boer industry.

Besides the one breeder submitting carcase scanning data to KIDPLAN, only one other breeder was located that was collecting this data.

No breeders were located that were collecting individual worm egg counts.

In the rangeland environment very little performance data is collected. There is the occasional breeder selecting bucks on weights with no adjustment for age, birth type etc. These though are rare.

Seedstock breeders in general are not overly interested in collecting more data than they currently are. This is in part due to two reasons:

- Breeders are struggling to retain financial viability and do not see the cost benefit of any, or further data collection. For many this would involve the acquisition of capital equipment.
- For those breeders currently collecting weight information, most consider it to be the one and only driver of profit in their business and see no reason to collect anything else.

Again, there are exceptions to this general position and certain members of BGBAA and the Boer Select group are interested in expanding their data collection program to include carcase scanning and worm egg counts. However, many are yet to be convinced of the economic merit of the additional cost and a concerned that with limited data being submitted on these traits, it is not worth the expense to do it themselves.

4. KIDPLAN

KIDPLAN commenced receiving data in 1997 and since that time a total of 22 seedstock breeders have at some point been a member. Currently, there are 6 active members submitting data.

Usage of KIDPLAN peaked around 2000 and then slowly lost momentum up until 2011 when a total of 4 new members joined as part of the Boer Select group.

Many of the previous members of KIDPLAN that are no longer involved have left the industry for commercial reasons, others no longer see the value of being a KIDPLAN member and are focused on the show ring as a measure of their performance.

KIDPLAN, like LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT, is a technically sound genetic benchmarking tool. There is little criticism of the service within the industry with most breeders admitting lack of understanding as the main reason for not being involved.

The small amount of negative feedback that was received can be summarised as follows:

- KIDPLAN is just LAMBPLAN rebadged and not really designed for the goat industry.
- KIDPLAN does not focus enough on early stage growth traits and has too much focus on reproduction traits.
- KIDPLAN indexes are not commercially relevant.
- There's not enough linkage so across herd comparisons are limited.

These issues can be easily addressed by Sheep Genetics and MLA and should be as a way of increasing uptake and satisfaction with breeders. They are not seen as significant barriers to the adoption of KIDPLAN.

There are though significant barriers to the adoption of KIDPLAN for many seedstock breeders. These relate to the demographics of the Boer industry as well as the environment that the rangeland industry operates in.

It appears that the majority of Boer seedstock breeders operate on a very small scale when compared to the sheep and cattle industries, with many operators admitting to being a 'single sire stud'. The results of this are twofold:

- Many of these seedstock breeders are hobby farmers and more interested in the
 personal attributes of the animal than its commercial ability. As one seedstock breeder
 said, "Breeding Boers is more akin to breeding dogs than it is to sheep and cattle. Goats
 are such enchanting animals that people find it hard not to fall in love with them."
 - This situation does not lend itself to commercial culling decisions being made and therefore there is very little selection pressure placed on the majority of smaller herds.
- Secondly, the economics of these small herds does not allow for investment in the capital equipment required to weigh animals or the contracting of services to carry out carcase scanning or individual worm egg counting. As a result, very little performance data is recorded.

Even in some of the larger Boer seedstock operations, evidence of these two barriers was seen to exist. As a result, it would be wise to moderate any expectations for the growth of KIDPLAN within the Boer industry in the near future.

In general there is a much higher degree of commercial acumen in the rangeland environment, where very few hobby farmers would survive. In this environment a completely different set of barriers to the adoption of KIDPLAN exist.

- The majority of rangeland goat operations, be them seedstock or commercial, are run on a low input basis. That is, large mobs of animals are run under minimal management and usually only yarded for sale. The additional resources that the collection of pedigree and performance data would require would far outweigh any commercial benefit that could ever accrue even under the most favourable of outcomes.
- The competitiveness of the rangeland buck or 'feral billy' cannot be underestimated when it comes to getting does in kid. Many rangeland producers that have attempted to introduce superior genetics have failed to have any impact on the production of their herd due to only a minority of progeny being born to the introduced bucks.
- The survivability of introduced bucks into the rangeland environment is a related issue
 and one that prevents producers investing in external genetics. Many rangeland
 produces report of significant losses when bucks are introduced. Whilst others believe
 that by sourcing animals from commercially run operations and with the correct induction
 processes, this can be successfully achieved.

The final and perhaps easiest to address barrier to the adoption of KIDPLAN across all seedstock breeders is lack of knowledge. There are very few breeders that have even a basic understanding of how KIDPLAN operates and the benefits of being involved. Even those breeders that are seen as leaders in this area lack the detailed understanding that is a requirement to be advocates of the system.

Due to the economic circumstances of the goat industry and obvious barriers that are preventing KIDPLAN being adopted by all but the true believers, there have been limited resources directed to increasing the knowledge of breeders either by MLA or Sheep Genetics over the last 10 years. This is evident by:

• The lack of a significant resource within Sheep Genetics to focus on goat industry client service and adoption. Currently the LAMBPLAN Project Officer is responsible for

KIDPLAN. However the capacity of that role to deliver goat outcomes is severely limited by the demands of the LAMBPLAN role taking up nearly all of the time available.

- The absence of KIDPLAN related extension material being generated by Sheep Genetics or MLA. The current suite of KIDPLAN material available via the KIDPLAN website dates back to 2000.
- The KIDPLAN website is not part of the Sheep Genetics website and not in line with the MERINOSELECT or LAMBPLAN sites in either presentation, available information or functionality

By no means are the above comments meant as criticism of either the management of Sheep Genetics or MLA. They are simply a function of other priorities taking precedence where return on investment is more likely or external resources are being leveraged.

5. The way forward

The current stocktake of the goat seedstock industry paints a reasonably dim picture of a Boer industry struggling to be commercially relevant whilst being wed to the traditions of the show ring. Meanwhile, rangeland producers are under a constant price squeeze and need to remain competitive with the sheep industry and can ill afford to increase expenditure on management costs.

As a result, there is very little performance data currently being collected in the industry and only a small number of seedstock breeders active in the area of genetic benchmarking.

Furthermore, there does not appear to be an overwhelming desire from the industry to increase their collection of data or to become involved in genetic programs.

However, within this industry there are groups and individuals that are commercially focused and understand the merits of a more quantitative approach to breeding and selection. These are the participants that MLA needs to work closely with.

In order to do this MLA has the appropriate tools already available to them. These are:

- KIDPLAN
- Producer Demonstration Sites
- Current extension publications "Goats on the Move" and "Going into Goats"

It is with these tools that MLA will have a positive impact on the production and profitability of goat enterprises through improved genetics.

5.1. KIDPLAN

Whilst KIDPLAN is not viable for every breeder, it should remain the cornerstone of the MLA goat genetic initiative with all other activities designed to increase the adoption of KIDPLAN and the use of the breeding values it produces.

Whilst KIDPLAN is a technically sound program, there are several areas where its products could be improved, service upgraded and associated supporting materials relaunched.

 The KIDPLAN website requires updating and bringing into line with LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT. This will not only provide access to better information but also give confidence to the goat seedstock industry that MLA and Sheep Genetics sees value in them as stakeholders / clients. Access to breeding values on the website, as is the case with the LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT websites, will be an important part of this upgrade.

- There is demand for a set of simplified indexes focusing on core production traits of growth and muscle along the lines of the Carcase Plus Index. The Boer Goat \$ index is considered to have too much emphasis on Maternal Weaning Weight which is heavily influence by Number of Kids Weaned.
- MLA should consider funding a higher level of staff resourcing to the KIDPLAN program
 than is currently the case. The current combination of the LAMBPLAN and KIDPLAN
 roles results in KIDPLAN clients and potential clients being underserviced.
- The full suite of KIDPLAN supporting material requires rewriting. The majority of the currently available material is more than 10 years old and well out of date. Some of the publications that require attention are:
 - An Introduction to KIDPLAN
 - KIDPLAN EBV Definitions
 - Understanding KIDPLAN reports
 - KIDPLAN Breeder's Guide

Many of these would require limited updating with most material available from updated LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT publications.

- Where demand exists, resources should be directed to providing breeder workshops to groups of breeders that are interested in advancing their knowledge in the area of KIDPLAN.
- A "Try Before You Buy" program should be rolled out to Goat breeders as per that available to Merino breeders. This program should be widely promoted to goat breeders.

In summary KIDPLAN requires an overhaul of services and supporting material. It needs to be bought up to speed with LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT.

Whilst the program could not support a dedicated Sheep Genetics Project Officer, as can LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT, it does require an increase in the level of resources directed towards it in order to commence addressing the deficiencies highlighted here.

The focus of increasing KIDPLAN adoption needs to be targeted at moderate to large scale commercially focused seedstock breeders that are providing genetics to commercial operations operating in both the agricultural and rangeland environments. It is these seedstock operations that have the scale to undertake the necessary investment and will have the largest impact on the overall goat population. It is anticipated that the current project that BGBAA is undertaking to audit the herd register will greatly assist in the targeting of these breeders.

5.2. Producer Demonstration Sites

Producer Demonstration Sites (PDS) have been a successful method of increasing adoption across a wide range of MLA projects. It is considered that similar success could be achieved by the establishment of a PDS to focus on goat genetics. Specifically, the PDS could:

 Provide an on-the-ground evaluation of currently available goat genetics in a typical commercial environment. Run along the same lines as a sire evaluation or young sire program, the PDS would involve a selection of bucks (not breed specific) being joined through AI to a random group of commercial does. The progeny of those joinings would then be evaluated for a range of commercially important traits.

- As the resulting data from the PDS would be submitted to KIDPLAN, assuming the
 bucks were chosen strategically, strong linkage would be created in KIDPLAN between
 current and potential clients. This would alleviate one of the barriers to KIDPLAN
 adoption. To achieve this outcome, some of the bucks to be evaluated would need to be
 selected from those seedstock breeders that are being targeted as part of the project to
 increase KIDPLAN adoption.
- One of the major obstacles to increasing the productivity of commercial herds through the use of external genetics is firstly being able to manage the feral billy population and secondly ensuring that the performance bucks bought in can survive in the environment. A secondary focus of a PDS could be on these two issues. There are producers that are successfully keeping feral billies out as well as inducting production bucks into their environment. Processes that showcase industry best practice in these areas will be critical in ensuring outside genetics can be successfully bought into a commercial goat enterprise and multiplied accordingly.

5.3. Current extension publications

MLA currently has access to two very good extension vehicles; "Goats on the Move" and "Going into Goats", both of which could be better utilised to extend the benefits of genetics in the goat industry.

- A regular article on genetics in "Goats on the Move" would assist in building breeder's and producer's awareness of the role genetics can play in their operation. Articles could include:
 - Basic understanding and awareness building of KIDPLAN.
 - Case studies on breeders using KIDPLAN.
 - Breeding and selection advice in the rangeland environment.
 - Case studies on rangeland producers using selection and breeding.
 - Examples of what is occurring in sheep and cattle genetics and how it could be incorporated into the goat industry.
 - o Genomic information.
- The Goat Selection module included in "Going into Goats" would benefit from being rewritten with more focus on KIDPLAN and breeding and selection as opposed to the current content being largely directed at selecting the type of goat for an enterprise. KIDPLAN is currently only mentioned in passing and the module concludes with a statement to the effect that selection is of only of minor importance.

6. Recommendations

The following are provided as recommendations to be considered by MLA and are aimed at increasing the genetic potential of the Australian goat industry. The recommendations are centred on the three pillars of People, Projects and Promotion.

6.1. People

There is a lack of genetic advocates in the goat industry. There are individuals and groups that have an interest in goat selection and breeding and if supported and encouraged have the ability to deliver industry wide genetic improvement programs. To achieve this, it is recommended that MLA:

- 1. Continue to work closely with BGBAA to encourage the uptake of selection and breeding programs such as KIDPLAN.
- 2. Provide support and assistance to the Boer Select group in order to create industry 'champions' for goat selection and breeding. The same support should also be provided to other groups if identified.
- 3. Provide support and assistance to the NSW DPI in assisting the Western NSW rangeland producer group increase their awareness of selection and breeding techniques available to them. The same support should also be provided to other rangeland groups if identified.

6.2. Projects

There is currently no commercial incentive for organisations such as Sheep Genetics or state departments to establish projects aimed at delivering genetic gain in the goat industry. MLA must play a crucial role in this area. To achieve this, it is recommended that MLA:

- 4. Provide a greater human resource component than is current available through Sheep Genetics to service the goat industry through KIDPLAN.
- 5. Bring up to date the current KIDPLAN website in line with functionality of the LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT website.
- 6. Update the full suite of KIDPLAN supporting material that is available both on and off line.
- 7. Host workshops for breeders to gain an understanding of the benefits of KIDPLAN and implement a supporting "Try Before You Buy" program to convert interest at breeder workshops into KIDPLAN members.
- 8. Establish at least one Producer Demonstration Site in conjunction with a group of commercially focused seedstock breeders and rangeland producers aimed at evaluating a range of available genetics in a commercial environment. Data from the project should be submitted to KIDPLAN to provide linkage between collaborating herds.
- 9. Include as part of the Producer Demonstration Site activities that showcase industry best practice in the area of feral billy management and the induction of introduced bucks into a commercial rangeland environment.

6.3. Promotion

Outcomes of the activities undertaken within the People and Projects portfolios require promotion so as other breeders and producers can learn from the experiences and adopt the practices in their own operation. To achieve this, it is recommended that MLA:

- 10. Provide regular articles in "Goats on the Move" on goat genetic improvements and the outcomes of projects targeted at increasing the genetic potential of the goat industry.
- 11. Update and relaunch the Selection module of "Going into Goats" so as it provides up to date and relevant information for breeders and producers wanting to improve their selection and breeding techniques and the use of KIDPLAN.